

# CURRENT TOPICS

A STORY OF thrift as told by an Associated Press dispatch from San Francisco follows: "Charles Harvey, a retired soldier, who has been post quartermaster sergeant at Fort Rosecrans for some time, drew yesterday from Colonel George R. Smith, chief paymaster of the department of California the sum of \$13,900, the amount he had saved from his pay through the army deposit plan. This is the second largest sum the chief paymaster of this department has ever paid to a soldier. Besides this amount Harvey will receive for the rest of his life \$67.50 a month as retired pay."

be it resolved, that the president be requested to transmit to the house any evidence upon which he based his statements that the 'chief argument in favor of the provision was that the congressmen did not themselves wish to be investigated by secret service men,' and also to transmit to the house any evidence connecting any member of the house of representatives of the Sixtieth congress with corrupt action in his official capacity, and to inform the house whether he has instituted proceedings by punishment of any such individual by the courts or has reported any such alleged delinquencies to the house of representatives."

THE ENEMIES of Speaker Cannon lost in the first battle. Mr. Gardner of Massachusetts offered an amended resolution calling for the appointment of a committee of eight to consider the question of the revision of the house rules and to make a report to congress. An Associated Press report says: "A substantial majority of the house voted to take away from the committee on foreign affairs consideration of the resolution which in its original form simply called for information from the secretary of state regarding what the British house of commons had done in that regard. A ruling by the speaker that the amendment of Mr. Gardner changed the character of the resolution in such a way as not to make it privileged was sustained, and the resolution then was laid on the table. Twenty republicans voted against the speaker, as follows: Boyd of Nebraska, Campbell of Kansas, Caulfield of Missouri, Cooper of Wisconsin, Davis of Minnesota, Ellis of Missouri, Fowler of New Jersey, Gardner of Massachusetts, Gronna of North Dakota, Howland of Ohio, Hubbard of West Virginia, Lindbergh of Minnesota, McKinley of California, Madison of Kansas, Nelson of Minnesota, Nye of Minnesota, Pearre of Maryland, Pollard of Nebraska, Sturgis of West Virginia and Volstead of Minnesota. The resolution then, on motion of Mr. Gardner, after he had further attacked the rules of the house, was laid on the table, 137 to 42, which has the effect of killing the whole proposition."

THE HOUSE of representatives, by unanimous vote, has adopted a resolution calling the president to account for his civil service message. The resolution was offered by Mr. Perkins, republican, of New York, chairman of the special committee. The resolution as adopted is as follows: "Whereas, There was contained in the sundry civil appropriation bill which passed congress at its last session and became a law, a provision in reference to the employment of the secret service of the treasury department; and whereas, in the last annual message of the president of the United States to the two houses of congress, it was stated, in reference to that provision: 'It is not too much to say that this amendment has been of benefit only and could be of benefit only to the criminal classes;' and it was further stated: 'The chief argument in favor of the provision was that the congressmen did not themselves wish to be investigated by secret service men'; and it was further stated: 'But if this is not considered desirable a special exception could be made in the law, prohibiting the use of the secret service force in investigating members of congress. It would be far better to do this than to do what actually was done and strive to prevent or at least to hamper effective action against criminals by the executive branch of the government;' and whereas, the plain meaning of the words is that the majority of the congressmen were in fear of being investigated by secret service men, and that congress as a whole was actuated by that motive in enacting the provision in question; and, whereas, your committee appointed to consider these statements of the president and to report to the house can not find in the hearings before committees nor in the records of the house or senate justification for this impeachment of the honor and integrity of the congress; and, whereas, your committee would prefer, in order to make an intelligent and comprehensive report, just to the president, as well as to the congress, to have all the information which the president may have to communicate; therefore,

IN REPORTING the resolution, Mr. Perkins said it had been recommended unanimously by the special committee and he promised that as soon as the president should send in any information the committee would make another report to the house. The Associated Press report of the house proceedings says: "Representative John Sharp Williams expressed the hope that the resolution would be adopted promptly and practically without debate. Mr. Williams said the committee would impartially report upon 'this seemingly unprovoked and unjustified attack upon the honesty and reputation of the legislative branch of the government.' 'So far as the committee knows,' said Mr. Williams, 'there is not a scintilla of evidence to support that statement by the president. The committee has thought it would be fair to the president to give him further opportunity to produce testimony if he has any. The American people have a right to know if the American congress be corrupt.' Such a procedure, he concluded, would allow the country which, he said, 'was the master of both of us,' to exercise judgment in the matter. The special committee, he said, would remain in session 'ready to receive, to consider and to weigh whatsoever competent evidences the president can furnish with resolute justice and impartiality.' Mr. Perkins said that the committee was actuated by a desire to be entirely just to the president, and he added that it had brought in the resolution with that purpose in view. Mr. Keifer of Ohio, wanted to know whether the words 'if not incompatible, with the public service,' should not be inserted in the resolution, as is usual in calling on the president for information. This suggestion called forth laughter and Mr. Perkins declared that the resolution as worded was 'a request for information and was imperative in its wording.' Mr. Perkins then cut off further discussion by demanding the previous question, and Speaker Cannon calling for a viva voce vote there was a chorus of 'ayes' favoring the passage of the resolution, followed by a dead silence when the noes were called for."

SENATOR ALDRICH of Rhode Island introduced in the senate a resolution authorizing an inquiry respecting the "insult" offered to congress in connection with the secret service matter in the president's annual message. The Aldrich resolution was referred to the committee on contingent expenses and immediately Senator Keane, representing that committee, reporting the Aldrich resolution with recommendation that it pass. Senator Culberson of Texas, democrat, objected. Finally the resolution was amended to suit Senator Culberson and, as adopted, it was as follows: "Resolved, That that portion of the annual message of the president relating to the secret service is hereby referred to the committee on appropriations who are instructed to inquire whether the legislation referred to in the message has impaired the efficiency or sufficiency of the force employed in the secret service and such committee are further directed to ascertain what portions other than those included in the secret service were paid from the public treasury for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1908, for services in connection with the enforcement of the laws or for work in the detection or investigation of possible crimes or criminal acts or violations of the law, including all special attorneys, special agents, inspectors, or other employes of any department of the government or any branch of the

public service and also some information as to all persons whose employment was authorized by indefinite or general appropriations; the information to contain the names of all persons so employed or paid, their previous occupation, the nature of the work in which they were engaged, by whom they were appointed, and upon whose suggestion or recommendation; the inquiry, however, not to include officers appointed by the president and confirmed by the senate, or officers specifically provided for by law, or laborers appointed as such and actually engaged in employment as laborers. For the purpose of carrying out the instructions of the senate, the committee on appropriations are hereby, by sub-committee or otherwise, to sit during the sessions or recess of the senate, to send for persons and papers and to subpoena witnesses, administer oaths, to examine witnesses under oath and to employ such clerical and other assistance as shall enable the committee to report fully and promptly upon the matters contained in this inquiry, the expenses to be paid from the contingent fund of the senate, upon vouchers approved by the acting chairman of the committee on appropriations and said committee are further directed to report as soon as practicable, from time to time the result of the inquiry and to make such recommendations as they may see fit with reference thereto, and further to report what action, if any, in the judgment of the committee, the senate should take with reference to that portion of the message."

THERE WAS considerable discussion over the Aldrich resolution. Mr. Bailey of Texas thought that the resolution as introduced by the Rhode Island senator was not sufficiently explicit. Mr. Bailey objected to the resolution because it did not direct the committee to "inquire into the very gross and wanton words" of the president's message. "So far as I am concerned," he said, "no action should be taken on that resolution until that point is covered. Either congress is the most infamous body that ever assembled in any country of the world or it will take some notice of the most wanton and gross insult, ever given any body in the world." Mr. Aldrich insisted that the resolution provided for just what Mr. Bailey advocated but the senator from Texas retorted that if that was included in the resolution, it was in mild terms. "The president," he said, "is not so careful in what he says about congress, and I can not understand why congress is so careful about what it says about him. I regard this as the most insulting message ever sent to any body. I doubt if a mayor ever sent such a message to a corrupt city council. I believe in talking plainly to people who talk plainly to us. I believe in reciprocity of that kind. If the president was not justified in making those statements that message ought to be sent back to him. No self respecting body should receive a message which impeaches its honor." Mr. Hale declared the resolution was sufficiently strongly worded to permit the committee on appropriations to make the kind of report desired by Mr. Bailey. He said that as chairman of the committee on appropriations he would prefer to have had the resolution sent to some other committee but he proposed that the committee would not shirk its duty. "I would like to inquire of the senator from Maine," interposed Mr. Tillman, "whether he thinks the senate has been insulted." Mr. Hale insisted that everyone had his own opinion on that subject and anyone was as able as he to form an opinion.

MR. TILLMAN insisted that according to the president's message congress is composed of a lot of "rascals and scoundrels who belong in the penitentiary." Mr. Hale replied that there had been a good deal of restlessness and indignation in the senate. "There is no restlessness at the White House," retorted Mr. Tillman. "They are cool and calm as can be there." Mr. Bailey then asserted that in view of what Mr. Hale had said about the scope of the resolution he would not object to it. "I think," continued Mr. Bailey, "that it is remarkable that the ques-